

education and public service and faith, a spirit that has helped make America what it is today.

It is my honor to welcome you all here. May God bless Greece, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:27 p.m. in the Presidential Hall at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church of America; Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs Yiannis Magriotis of Greece; Greek Ambassador to the U.S. Alexandros Philon; and Cypriot Ambassador to the U.S. Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis.

Proclamation 7535—Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy, 2002

March 25, 2002

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Ancient Greece was the birthplace of the democratic principles and thought that fundamentally shaped the growth of democracy in world history. Societies aspiring toward more democratic forms of government have found inspiration in the Greek tradition of representative government and free political discourse. As modern Greece celebrates the anniversary of its independence, won 181 years ago, Greeks can be proud that its vibrant democracy continues and that it is based upon the beliefs in freedom and self-rule first forged in classical Greece over 2500 years ago.

These ideals have been embraced by peoples of the world who aspire towards democracy, including the Founders of the United States; and they were tested by the attacks of September 11, 2001. The terrorists sought to destroy a political and economic system that promotes individual freedoms and tolerance, defends national liberty, and supports the full participation of its citizens in the democratic process. The terrorists failed; but rather than destroying us, their attacks strengthen our resolve to stand up to this evil.

Along with the members of our worldwide coalition, including Greece, we are committed to defeating terrorism and protecting liberty.

The friendship between the United States and Greece continues to thrive and is based upon our common cultural bonds and our shared national values. Today, more than 3 million Americans proudly claim Greek heritage, representing a continuing link between our countries. From the arts and education to industry and science, Greek Americans have made significant contributions to the cultural, civic, and economic vitality of our land.

As we celebrate Greek independence, we remember the history of those who sacrificed their lives to preserve freedom and democracy. We value our friendship and continuing partnership with the government and people of Greece, and we commit to work together to provide greater opportunity and more freedoms for the citizens of the world. And we join the world in anticipating the momentous 2004 Summer Olympic Games, which will be held in Athens, the birthplace of Olympic competition.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 25, 2002, as “Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy.” I encourage all Americans to take special note of Greece’s rich history of democracy, the strong bonds of friendship and culture between our countries, and the important role that Greek Americans play in our Nation.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fifth day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., March 27, 2002]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 28.

**Remarks Announcing the
Nominations of Dr. Elias Zerhouni
To Be Director of the National
Institutes of Health and Dr. Richard
Carmona To Be Surgeon General**

March 26, 2002

Well, thank you, Tommy, very much, and welcome to the White House for this historic announcement. I appreciate your leadership, Tommy, in leading this administration's strong efforts to improve our Nation's health care, to make sure that more Americans get affordable health care, better patient protections, that the system puts our patients first, the system understands the importance of our docs, and we value that relationship, patient and doctor.

I also want to assure our fellow Americans that we're going to make and are making an unprecedented commitment to medical research. And we're improving our public health system to make sure that we can respond quickly to any biological threat that our country may face. We're putting sound health care policies in place and, as importantly, putting a quality team in place. And that's what we're here to discuss today.

It's my honor to nominate two fine men to head important Government institutions, to take important jobs. My nominee to lead the National Institute of Health is Elias Zerhouni, and my nominee as the next Surgeon General is Richard Carmona. These are distinguished physicians who have worked tirelessly to save lives and to improve lives. They bring exceptional knowledge and skill to these critical jobs. And they are absolutely dedicated to improving the health and well-being of all Americans.

It is my honor to welcome their families here as well. Thank you all for coming, Nadia Zerhouni and her children, and Diane Carmona and her children. We welcome you all, and we're glad you're here. I want to thank the Acting NIH Director, Ruth Kirschstein, for being here as well. Where are you, Ruth? There you are. Thank you so much, Ruth, for a fine job. I appreciate the Acting Surgeon General. Ken, where are you? Ken, thank you for being here, and thank you for your fine job as well.

I want to thank the former NIH Director, Harold Varmus, for being here. Antonia Novello is here. Thank you, Antonia. I remember you. [Laughter] She was a former Surgeon General under "41." [Laughter] And I'm so pleased that former House Minority Leader Bob Michel, former Senator Dennis DeConcini of Arizona, former Congressman John Porter, as well, from Illinois, is here. Thank you all for coming. We're honored you're here. And I also want to thank the Ambassador from Algeria for being here as well. Thank you all for coming.

The National Institutes of Health is entering a new era of medical promise. NIH researchers recently cracked the genetic code, an amazing achievement with enormous potential benefits. New diagnostic tools are alerting patients when they have an elevated risk of certain diseases, so they can take an active role in preventing them. New treatment therapies will be tailor-made for an individual's genetic makeup. And many medical treatments will become less invasive. American medicine is on the verge of dramatic progress against AIDS, against diabetes, and against heart disease. We're closing in on cancer's cause and cancer's cure.

The anthrax attacks against American citizens also demonstrated the need to strengthen our defenses against bioterrorism. Medical research will improve our ability to identify and respond and treat infectious diseases, whether they occur naturally or are used as terrorist weapons. The NIH has taken a leading role in this important front on the war against terror. The work of the National Institutes of Health have never been more promising and never been more important.

Leading the NIH is a great responsibility, and I have picked the right man to do so. Dr. Zerhouni and his wife immigrated to America from Algeria with \$300 in their pocket, but a dream of opportunity. Today, he is the executive vice dean of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, the chairman of the department of radiology and radiological science at Johns Hopkins, and a professor of radiology and biomedical engineering. He is an expert in biomedical research and is committed to extending his benefits to all Americans and all humanity.